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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 237 Session of  
2019

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INTRODUCED BY FONTANA, DiSANTO, PHILLIPS-HILL, BARTOLOTTA,  
HUGHES, MARTIN, MASTRIANO, STREET, FARNESE, BROWNE, J. WARD,  
IOVINO, DINNIMAN, HUTCHINSON, MENSCH, TARTAGLIONE, YUDICHAK,  
AUMENT, BLAKE, COSTA AND SABATINA, OCTOBER 21, 2019

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INTRODUCED AND ADOPTED, OCTOBER 21, 2019

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A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the month of October 2019 as "Italian-American  
2 Heritage Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Explorer Christopher Columbus, the son of a wool  
4 merchant, was born in Genoa, Italy, around 1451; and

5 WHEREAS, During Columbus's time, most people believed that  
6 the world was formed mainly of one giant landmass consisting of  
7 Europe, Asia and Africa, mostly because these were the only  
8 continents mentioned in the Bible, and surrounded by one  
9 enormous body of water they called the ocean sea; and

10 WHEREAS, Christopher Columbus was determined to find a  
11 quicker route west from Europe to Asia and embarked on what  
12 would become four trips across the Atlantic Ocean starting in  
13 1492; and

14 WHEREAS, During his voyage, Christopher Columbus accidentally  
15 stumbled upon the Americas and his journey was a catalyst for  
16 centuries of exploration of the Americas; and

17 WHEREAS, Columbus has also been credited with opening up the

1 Americas to European colonization and what is known as the  
2 "Columbian Exchange" which set into motion the widespread  
3 transfer of people, plants, animals and cultures; and

4 WHEREAS, These included staples such as wheat, barley, rice,  
5 tomatoes, potatoes, coffee, sugar cane, corn and apples as well  
6 as horses, cattle, sheep and goats; and

7 WHEREAS, While Italians have always been a part of American  
8 history, it was not until the 1820s that Italian immigrants  
9 began moving to the United States in sizable numbers; and

10 WHEREAS, Italian immigrants arrived relatively unskilled but  
11 soon helped fuel a booming industrial economy by providing labor  
12 for American factories and mines and helping to build roads,  
13 dams, tunnels and other infrastructure; and

14 WHEREAS, For this reason, Italian Americans started  
15 celebrating the life and accomplishments of Christopher Columbus  
16 as a way for citizens of Italian descent to be accepted by the  
17 mainstream; and

18 WHEREAS, In 1937, President Franklin D. Roosevelt proclaimed  
19 Columbus Day as a national holiday; and

20 WHEREAS, We credit Christopher Columbus with Italian  
21 immigration to the New World and what is now Pennsylvania; and

22 WHEREAS, Currently, there are more than 17 million Americans  
23 of Italian heritage in the United States, and more than 1.4  
24 million Americans of Italian heritage residing in Pennsylvania;  
25 and

26 WHEREAS, In 1905, the Order Sons of Italy in America was  
27 formed with the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania to follow in 1913;  
28 and

29 WHEREAS, More recently, the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania  
30 became an independent organization and was renamed the Grand

1 Lodge of Pennsylvania Sons and Daughters of Italy, existing to  
2 promote education, encourage the dissemination of Italian  
3 culture, organize programs for patriotic and humanitarian  
4 purposes and combat discrimination while protecting and  
5 upholding the positive image of Italian heritage; therefore be  
6 it

7       RESOLVED, That the Senate recognize the month of October 2019  
8 as "Italian-American Heritage Month" in Pennsylvania and commend  
9 the early immigrants for their important role in our  
10 Commonwealth's history.